

Keynotes for June 3–6 Annual Meeting

Yes, that headline says “June” Annual Meeting.

For the first time in years, the Northern California Nevada Conference Annual Meeting at Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove will not be in May, but in June. It will begin Thursday, June 3, in the afternoon and go through lunch on Sunday, June 6, to be exact.

So circle the dates on your church and personal calendars. Select your delegates. Encourage other church members to attend. Don’t forget youth delegates.

Start those fundraisers to help cover the costs of anyone who wants to go. Ask or plan to take Friday, June 4, off work.

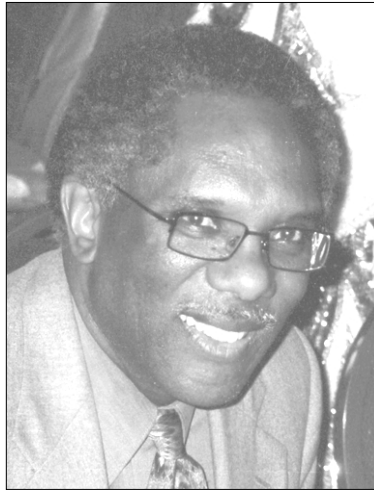
See if attendance records can be broken; last year 565 folks from 102 churches were on hand. Can those figures be raised by 10 percent?

The Annual Meeting theme is “God is Still Speaking.” And it would be hard to find two keynote speakers who are more qualified to lead us than John Thomas and Art Cribbs.

Rev. John Thomas is the general minister and president of the United Church of Christ. Prior to his election in 1999, Thomas served for eight years in the Office of the president of the UCC as assistant to the president for ecumenical concerns. Thomas coordinated the work done by the UCC in national and international settings with other denominations, councils of churches and interfaith groups. He has been a member of the board of directors of the U.S. Office of the World Council of Churches since 1992 as well as a member of the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches.

Thomas began his ministry as a local church pastor in Cheshire, Conn., and Easton, Pa. He was active in those communities in hospital chaplaincy and helped to start a food bank and homeless drop-in center. Born in Connecticut in 1950, Thomas graduated from Darien High School.

He earned a B.A. degree in history from Gettysburg (Pa.) College (1972) and an M.Div. degree from Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, Conn. (1975). He also studied at the World Council of Churches’ Ecu-



Rev. Art Cribbs

menical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, in 1988. He and his wife, Lynda, have two children.

John Thomas is an inspiring speaker, a profound thinker and a bold visionary. Ask anyone who heard him speak when he was in Northern California last January, or any of the 75 NCNC folks who were at General Synod, where he spoke at many different events with courage, humor and integrity.

Rev. Art Cribbs will also open hearts and minds to new ways of hearing the still-speaking God. Cribbs grew up in the Watts-Willowbrook area of South Central L.A. He has lived a parallel life between media and ministry since he was 13 years old, when he preached his first sermon in the Baptist church where his father was pastor. One month later he wrote his first news story for his junior high school newspaper.

Right after high school, Cribbs got involved in a civil rights project sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee. This was a significant event that changed the course of his life. During his senior year in high school, he received a congressional appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. He had dreamed of becoming a career officer in the military. However, after spending the summer working with Quakers, he was converted to pacifism.

In 1999, Cribbs moved to San Diego with his wife, Kana, and their four children. He is pastor of Christian Fellowship UCC in San Diego; president



Rev. John Thomas

of Pacific Media Ministry and, co-founder of the Concerned African American Clergy and Laity, which addresses issues of HIV/AIDS in San Diego County’s African American communities.

He is an ethics instructor with the Justice Training Institute, a contractor with the California Department of Justice, and works closely with police executives throughout the state.

Cribbs has worked as a broadcast journalist across the nation. He is the former executive director of the UCC Office of Communication. He earned his B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Masters of Divinity from the Chicago Theological Seminary.

NCNC Moderator Paula Turk, Vice Moderator Tauoa Head and their Annual Meeting planning committee are hard at work planning worship, workshops and fellowship events to deepen the weekend with these two fine speakers.

They welcome additional members to the planning committee and folks who might do an occasional task. Interested persons should contact Paula at (650)368-9894 or email <Paulaturk@aol.com>.